DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 789 EA 007 828

AUTHOR Miller, Frank R.
TITLE The Selection and Appointment of School Heads. A Manual of Suggestions to Boards of Trustees and Candidates. Second Edition.
INSTITUTION National Association of Independent Schools, Boston, Mass.
PUB DATE Nov 75
NOTE 50p.; Related document is ED 083 752
AVAILABLE FROM National Association of Independent Schools, 4 Liberty Square, Boston, Massachusetts 02109 ($2.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Personnel; Administrator Evaluation; Administrator Qualifications; *Administrator Selection; *Board of Education Role; *Chief Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; Guidelines; Job Applicants; *Private Schools; *Trustees

ABSTRACT

This publication is intended primarily to guide private school trustees in the task of finding, selecting, and hiring a new headmaster or superintendent for their school. However, part of the content is aimed at prospective candidates for such jobs, so the booklet has some value for them, as well. The booklet is organized in two major sections. Section 1 is addressed to the board of trustees and offers specific suggestions on how to recruit and evaluate applicants for the headmaster position. Section 2 is addressed to candidates for the job of headmaster and discusses various points they should consider in deciding whether to pursue or accept such a job. The appendix presents actual examples of various documents, letters, and descriptions that illustrate key steps in the hiring of a private school headmaster. (JG)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED117789

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
National Association of Independent Schools
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER"

THE SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL HEADS

A Manual of Suggestions
to
Boards of Trustees
and
Candidates

Frank R. Miller
Director of Administrative Services
NAIS

Second Edition
November 1975

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
4 Liberty Square, Boston, Massachusetts 02109

EA 007 828

Copyright © 1975 by the National Association of Independent Schools

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine or newspaper.

Printed in U.S.A.

Additional copies may be ordered at $2.50 each from

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
4 Liberty Square, Boston, Massachusetts 02109

CONTENTS

Foreword v

I. TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES 1

II. TO THE CANDIDATE 19

APPENDIXES

A. Announcement of Change of School Head 26

B. Description of School and Head's Position 30

C. Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity 33

D. The Function of the Consultant 34

E. Suggestions Concerning Candidates' Visits to Schools 38

F. Description of a Candidate's Visit 39

G. The Search Process 42

H. Suggested Reading 44

Foreword

The single personal relationship most vital to the health of the independent school is the one between the head of the school and the board of trustees. That relationship begins anew when the board is faced with the responsibility of finding and appointing a new head. If this delicate and difficult task is done carefully and well, all parties, and particularly the school itself, will be the beneficiaries.

It was in the hope of helping boards of independent schools to handle the various aspects of the selection process effectively that this book was first written in 1971. Having received reactions and advice from many trustees, candidates, and other readers, we decided to prepare this second edition, incorporating their comments and adding appendixes giving specific examples of ways to proceed. Examples in the appendixes are actual ones; names have been changed wherever this was necessary or seemed desirable.

Our suggestions are presented in two parts, one addressed to trustees, the other to prospective heads. We have done this deliberately, in the belief that it will be useful to both parties in this process to consider it not only from their own but also from the other's point of view.

We are indebted to all those who have contributed ideas and material for this book. In particular, our thanks go to Richard A. Kaplowitz and the American Council on Education for permission to quote from Selecting Academic Administrators: The Search Committee (1973), and to Joseph F. Kauffman and the Association of American Colleges for

letting us use passages from The Selection of College and University Presidents (1974). We are also grateful to those who read and commented on the draft of this text.

F. R. M.

I

TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The selection and appointment of a new head is the most important job facing any board of trustees of an independent school. If the trustees do their work well, they can look forward to years of harmonious, productive teamwork with the new head--not, perhaps, for as many years as was true in the past, when an easier, simpler, more stable campus ethos prevailed, but probably for eight to twelve years.* But if the job of choosing a new head is poorly or hastily done, the seeds of trouble will be quickly harvested. After one year, or perhaps two, the new head is out, often after an acrimonious dispute. Thus, not only must the job be done all over again, but the whole school community will have suffered a body blow of unpredictable proportions.

Certainly no one can prescribe the "perfect way" to hire a head. Each school has special qualities, strengths, weaknesses, and needs. Only its own board can judge candidates in relation to those characteristics. Nevertheless, certain general guidelines for this selection process emerge from our witnessing and aiding in hundreds of searches for new school heads. The following suggestions have proved helpful in the majority of the searches about which we know.

---

*The fact that the leadership of the school changes more often these days does not necessarily indicate instability on the part of the school. Today's heads simply change jobs more often, either moving to other schools or changing careers completely. Among the 800-odd NAIS member schools in 1974-75, 140 heads were at their second school, 20 where heading their third school, six were in their fourth headship, and one was heading his sixth school.

Before Selection Begins

When a change is likely--whether because of retirement, resignation, or board decision--a public announcement should be made as soon as possible, for it can be damaging to the entire school community to have this kind of news seep out unofficially, often accompanied by rumors and distortions. The ideal way to present this news is through a simultaneous announcement by the president of the board and the head of the school (see Appendix A). The announcement may cause a stir for a few days, but if it is done properly things settle down quickly and everyone goes about his business.

People often ask how soon such an announcement should be made. Some feel strongly that it should be made as early as possible, even as long as two years in advance. However, a "lame duck" administration and its accompanying difficulties are all too often the result of such premature action. Most schools, if the head is planning to leave at the end of the school year, make the announcement at the beginning of that school year.

The Selection Process

The first step in the selection process is to choose a selection or search committee. The word "search" may be preferable here, since there is at times a very real danger that the board may turn over the whole selection process to a committee, instructing it simply to "bring in the right person." Because this seems neither desirable, fair, nor even reasonable, we prefer "search committee"--precisely the committee's function.

Members of this committee should represent the various points of view within the board and indeed within the school. They should be

interested in the assignment and enthusiastic about it, know the school well, and, above all, be willing and able to give this delicate and difficult job the time it requires.

Much has been said about the composition and function of such a committee. Certainly two needs are paramount: (1) to seek a wide range of views and to foster a sense of sharing in the search process among the whole school community; and (2) to have a committee that is small enough to meet frequently and able to move as rapidly as need be. How these goals can best be achieved must be left to each individual school.

Once the search committee has been appointed, another important preliminary stage begins for the entire board: a realistic appraisal of the school to consider where it was five years ago, where it is today, and where the board wants it to be five to ten years from now. This exercise, which can be a valuable "review and refresher" for the entire board, must be completely honest and realistic, spelling out the board's thinking as specifically as possible.

Boards sometimes try to couch this appraisal in impressive-sounding "educationese"; they would do better to be as clear, down to earth, and specific as they can about their objectives. Whatever goals the board may have--socioeconomic mix of the student body, a financial-aid policy for students, broad educational goals--should be carefully defined. After all, if the new head is to commit himself and his professional career to carrying out the board's goals, he and the board must be able to agree quite clearly on what these goals are. It makes little sense for a board to "sell" a candidate on an overidealized picture of their school, only to have him discover quite another picture after taking office. The resulting disenchantment will doubtless shorten such a head's term of office.

Next, the committee should make a realistic analysis of the position it is seeking to fill. Many committees err here simply because they have not realized the number, variety, and complexity of the demands on the outgoing head's time and energy. If possible, the committee should ask the outgoing head for a written description of the nature and extent of his or her duties. It can then frame a careful and realistic job description, taking into consideration what parts of the job only the head can do, what parts can be overseen but delegated, and what parts can be wholly assumed by an assistant head, business manager, or other administrator. The "360° candidate"--one who is outstanding in every area--just does not exist. Thus, trustees should be prepared to bolster their final choice in areas in which he or she may be weak, unsuited, or just not interested.

Joseph F. Kauffman, addressing the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges in October 1974, pointed out that criteria for the selection of a new head should be directly related to the specific institution. Hence, the search committee's challenge is to match specific talents, skills, experiences, and commitments with the strengths and weaknesses of its own institution. Any attempt to borrow from another school's statement does not make much sense. (See Appendix B for a sample statement.)

Having defined the head's job, the committee should next prepare a description of their "ideal" candidate, realizing that they may have to settle for less. Ideal candidates are rare. Holding out for one can lead to a delay that can hurt the school. Here is a sample checklist for evaluating candidates:

Qualifications	Characteristics
1. Evidence of leadership capacity	1. Educational philosophy
2. Academic background	2. Personality
3. Teaching experience	3. Cultural background and interests
4. Administrative experience	4. Wife/husband and family
5. Public-relations success	5. Social
6. Fund-raising experience	6. Religious
	7. Political
	8. Age

Once again, we stress the importance of avoiding a too-detailed description of the perfect head, for this can easily result in the committee's boxing itself in. The person the committee finally selects may quite possibly lack some quality that the members originally thought was vital, but he might also offer some qualities that the committee had not considered at all.

Having analyzed and honestly described their school, and having analyzed and realistically described their expectations of the head, the search committee is almost ready to start looking at candidates. It should be aware of and avoid ways of going about its search that may seem attractive but could be blind alleys.

One of these is the "let's correct our last mistake" theory. ("Our last head was poor at public relations, so whatever else we do, let's get somebody who's good at PR.") Another is the "25-year" theory. ("This is a tough job, and we never want to have to do it again while we're trustees, so let's get a young one who will last for 25 years.") Another tempting road is "the great one's choice." ("Mary knows the

president of Haverberry College, and he has a candidate who he knows is just right for our school.") This may be fine, and the distinguished college president may be right, but several fine candidates chosen by this method have landed on a school campus that was wrong for them or they for it--with attendant disharmony.

Affirmative action/equal opportunity. The committee should be aware of the legal consequences of discriminating against candidates on the basis of color, race, religion, national origin, age, or sex. This caution applies to advertising the position, correspondence, and all other dealings with candidates. (See Appendix C.)

Office facilities. In all but the smallest schools, it is important that the search committee have adequate office facilities, not only to keep track of candidates and their credentials and correspondence, but also to speed up and make more effective the work of the committee. In The Selection of College and University Presidents, Joseph Kauffman notes,

> The search process requires staff assistance, an office where candidate credentials and other records may be kept with adequate security, and sufficient financial resources for telephone, postage, printing, secretarial assistance and possible travel for interviews and on-site visits. Neither committee members nor candidates should be expected to bear such costs personally. (p. 35)

An adequate office setup should probably include a secretary (at least part-time), a telephone (separately budgeted for), a typewriter, dictating equipment, stationery, file folders for each candidate, a filing cabinet, independent school handbooks (such as those of Porter Sargent, Bunting & Lyon, and Vincent Curtis), and, finally, definite office procedures and office hours.

Consultants

Opinions vary widely concerning the use of professional consultants to assist a search committee in the process of looking for a new head. Joseph Kauffman's advice to college and university boards applies equally well to independent schools:

> Some institutions may benefit from the use of an outside consultant to guide them in the search process. Outside consultants cannot, of course, do the work of the governing board or replace the participation of the key constituencies of the institution. A danger, also, is that some within the institution will resent the obvious influence of "outsiders." Nevertheless, professional counsel may be helpful in those cases where the lack of experience and confidence [or time] warrant such assistance. (p. 25)

Kauffman goes on to warn:

> There is a difference between asking for advice and turning over the whole job to a management consulting firm or agency [or individual]. Each governing board seeking assistance has to assess its own unique needs so that it will not purchase more than is required. Professional counsel may be useful in speeding up the search process, in identifying and obtaining information on candidates, or in selling a desirable candidate on the possibilities of an institution. . . .
>
> There are also disadvantages in using outside counsel. They may not really understand the ambience or needs of the institution and thus offend important elements among the constituencies. Also, they can be expensive . . . Further, they may not fully appreciate the value of participation by the various constituencies of an institution in the selection process.
>
> If a board employs a consulting agency, it should make clear what limits have been set on the consultant's task. The board must retain its full authority to make the actual selection and appointment of the president. (p. 25)

In preparing the second edition of this book, we asked two well-known consultants to independent schools to comment on the function of a consultant. Their remarks appear in Appendix D.

How Long Should the Search Take?

The final consideration before actually starting to look for candidates is the timing of the total process. The search committee must have sufficient lead time to do a careful, thorough job--unless it is unusually lucky.

What time schedule are we talking about? Joseph Kauffman believes that "a minimum of six months and, preferably, up to one year is required to conduct a search and selection of a new president" (p. 33). Richard A. Kaplowitz, in Selecting Academic Administrators: The Search Committee, sees this same process as taking from a minimum of 13 to a maximum of 34 weeks (p. 10).

It seems likely that these schedules for selecting college and university presidents are necessarily longer because of the greater complexity of the job. We feel that the average time for schools is generally three to six months. If the committee begins its work in the fall and more than six months are required for the search, the committee may have to consider an interim or acting head.

Or the committee may have ample time, if the outgoing head has announced his plans to retire well in advance. Since the "hunting season" for heads is usually restricted to a certain few months, however, the committee's time is quite short and rather specifically limited. What with August vacations and the summer wanderings of many candidates, the season does not begin until after Labor Day. And in most cases, candidates feel they must make a decision not much later than early March. (While appointments are sometimes made in April, May, or even June, the actual searches have generally been conducted well before that date.)

If the search committee is faced with a very short lead time, it may

have to consider an acting or interim head for a year in order to buy the necessary time. The acting head may come from inside or outside the school. A number of experienced, recently retired heads who can step in on short notice are usually available. One veteran head is now on his fifth such assignment--each handled, as one might expect, with tact and success. While an acting or interim head may be the best answer in a given situation, this is never an ideal solution. For if the board appoints as acting head a young, able, ambitious assistant administrator from within the school (who may be a declared or secret candidate for the outgoing head's job), it should be prepared to lose him within a year or so if someone else is appointed as the permanent head of the school.

Thus, there are three possible solutions to the problem of picking a new head. (1) Best: Find a permanent new head in the time allotted. (2) Second best: If the board can't find a good head in the time allotted, it should appoint an acting or interim head but keep searching actively for the permanent head (to avoid finding itself in the same predicament over again). (3) Worst: Choose somebody (anybody?) to meet a time deadline. The board that does this may find that it has chosen the wrong person. Then the job has to be done all over again, and the school probably ends up in a weaker condition as a result.

The Screening Process

Where does the search committee look for candidates? Both within the school and outside, certainly, for "inside" and "outside" candidates both have their strengths and weaknesses. The committee should beware of letting the distinguished outgoing head throw his mantle over the shoulders of any one of his assistants. Experience has shown that this

can lead to unfortunate results. In The Selection of College and University Presidents, Joseph Kauffman notes, "It is also recommended that the outgoing president be completely detached from the selection process. Although he or she may be helpful to the governing board in the development of search and screening procedures, the outgoing president should not be in the position of selecting a successor" (p. 21).

Some search committees have asked us, "If we have one or more very strong candidates within the school, is it really necessary to conduct a selection and search process?" Our answer is definitely "Yes." Even if there is one or more than one overwhelmingly strong candidate within the school, a search should still be made. In the process, the in-school candidate is compared with other qualified individuals, and, if he is ultimately chosen, both he and the board can feel reassured by the fact that he has met and mastered the competition.

In looking for candidates, the committee should spread its net widely. At the outset, the aim should be to get names and brief resumes of as many prospects as possible. There are many sources: NAIS maintains its School Head Clearinghouse Service; college placement offices often have strong candidates to suggest; experienced school heads are knowledgeable about possible candidates and can often suggest young "comers"; and other boards of trustees that have recently gone through this process may still have their lists of finalists, which they would probably be willing to share with the committee and might even possibly agree to reveal their ratings of these finalists. Capable and experienced independent school consultants can do preliminary screening for the committee and assist in various other ways, always under the committee's direction. NAIS can suggest the names of some experienced consultants.

One thing the committee should keep in mind is that its search should not be limited merely to announced available candidates. It is also important to seek out good prospects who may not have announced their availability at all. One trustee has suggested the type of letter that says, in essence, "If you yourself are not interested, perhaps you can recommend someone else whom you feel to be qualified." From this group of people not generally thought to be available may come many able candidates.

As soon as the list of candidates begins to mount, the committee's office should be set up and ready to operate. One suggestion appropriate at this early time is that each member of the committee keep his or her own, separate notes when reading applications. As Richard Kaplowitz points out, in Selecting Academic Administrators,

> Members of the search committee will be entrusted with the names, professional histories, and personal references of many individuals. Concerned faculty members, students, parents, and alumni, who are friends of committee members, will subtly (and not so subtly) seek out information about potential candidates. These questions must be deflected. . . . Complete discretion, both during and after the search process, is necessary and appropriate. With the exception of the search committee and the person or board it reports to, no one ought to know the name of any candidate except the successful one. (p. 6)

As an integral part of the screening process, records of each candidate must be kept, references must be checked, and the candidates' qualifications must be matched against the profiles of the school and the job. Here the telephone can be very useful, for at least two reasons. It is fast; in contrast to the frequent delays in written correspondence, you get a prompt reply, with the essential basic answers, in short order. It is frank; a former or present employer will often give you a confidential and more honest estimate of a candidate than he or she would put in a letter.

But even as the processes of assembling and screening candidates'

names and references is going on, the committee may wish to be moving further with certain obviously strong candidates. The reason for this is that many of the strong candidates may be receiving feelers from other schools at the same time, with a rather continuous turnover of candidates developing as a result. A candidate's name appears, his background is checked out, and the committee decides whether to continue his candidacy or end it. Candidates must be kept informed of their status, and they must be notified immediately when they are out of the running.

The Interview

Preliminary interviews may be held either at the school, at a trustee's home or office, or at the candidate's school during the initial investigation process.

What we are concerned with here is the formal interview at the school, which is reserved for candidates who are being given quite serious consideration. To be really effective, a visit of this type must be carefully planned and organized. (Suggestions regarding a visit of this type are contained in Appendix E.)

The search committee should think over carefully, in setting up the interview, just exactly what it feels the board should learn about the candidate and what the board wants the candidate to learn about the school and its situation. The way arrangements for such an interview are handled will tell the mature, thoughtful candidate a good deal about the quality of the board and its interest in the school. (See Appendix F for a detailed description of such a visit by an actual candidate to an actual school.) This is not a social occasion, even though time at the dinner table may tell you some useful things about the candidate and the candidate's spouse.

And if the candidate is a man, do not neglect his wife, for not only is she an important part of the team, but she may well influence her husband's final decision. Sally Uhle, wife of Alexander A. Uhle, a current headmaster, made some interesting comments to us on this matter in a letter of March 16, 1973.

> Many wives are moving away from hostessing only and being "seen and not heard," and are becoming more and more interested in the school because of the school's needs and their own interests. And coupled with this is a strong resistance to the previously prevalent theory that "if you hire a married man, you get his wife free." Wives today are increasingly interested in being recognized and even paid for their contributions, their time and their efforts for the good of the school. Or, if they don't want to be involved in the school, they want the freedom to be able to turn away from it completely and do something else. Their feeling is that if the trustees want to have the "traditional" headmaster's wife's duties filled, then they should hire someone to do them, not just assume that the wife will happily take them on just because she is married to the headmaster. The number of women who express their support of this new trend is surprising--and it is a rapidly growing group. Much of the discussion at recent NAIS conferences has centered around this trend, and afterwards, in private conversations with me, these strong--I would say almost militant--views came at me right and left. In other words, this view of the headmaster's wife's place, rights and role is changing fast, hard and now. What I have surveyed and written so far on the subject sounds almost mild compared to what some women are now guardedly saying. How long it will stay guarded is the question.

Thus, in view of wives' changing roles and attitudes, it seems only wise that other wives (both trustee and faculty) give candidates' wives complete information about the school, the community and its resources and educational and cultural opportunities, and all the other things that a wife and mother wants to know about a possible move to a new place, a new home, and a new setting.

Obviously, numerous questions have to be asked in such an interview, both by the board and by the candidate. Since it is an interview, and not an interrogation, trustees would do well to phrase their questions

generally, giving the candidate room to shape his answers and articulate his philosophy of education. For their part, the trustees should be ready to answer the candidate's questions factually and honestly. Since the candidate has come as far as an interview, he is obviously being given serious consideration. Hence, honesty on both sides is essential. If, for example, the school's finances are in bad shape, the trustees should tell the truth, even though they may fear that this news may diminish the candidate's enthusiasm. He will find out anyway, if he takes the job; better to find out from the board now than for himself later on.

It is also important for the candidate to have a chance to exchange ideas with various other members of the school community. If he becomes the head, he will be dealing with the teachers and students every day, so an exchange during his visit is not only reasonable but necessary, especially in light of today's climate of student opinion in independent schools. However, the candidate should not be thrown "cold" into a roomful of students or teachers on a catch-as-catch-can basis. If he is to talk with students and teachers, it is a good idea to discuss this process, and their part in it, with them in some detail. A candidate is not engaged in a popularity contest, nor is he answering the searching questions of a group of district attorneys. But if students and teachers realize that their comments about and reactions to candidates are an essential part of the selection process, they will approach the interview with better understanding--and the interview will have a correspondingly greater chance of success. And since parents and alumni are other important parts of the school family, the board should also give thought to including them at this time.

At some point during the interview, all questions about salary, raises,

retirement provisions, and perquisites should be raised and discussed. While no candidate is going to take the job to get rich, a clear and complete outline of these matters can give him a more specific idea of what he faces and remove uncertainties he might otherwise hesitate to mention.

The Final Step

The process of screening candidates and narrowing down what may be a lengthy list to the top few finalists is a difficult one. Frequently committees encounter real difficulty in reaching this spot. In Selecting Academic Administrators, Richard Kaplowitz makes a helpful suggestion to a committee that finds itself in this situation.

> One ranking technique that can prove helpful when a committee is not coming to closure is alternate ranking. Each committee member is asked to look at the list of candidates and to write down at the top of a piece of paper the name of the person he or she considers the strongest candidate. Then, each writes the name of the weakest candidate at the bottom of the page. Next, each person looks at the now slightly depleted list of candidates, picks the strongest of the remaining candidates on the list, and notes this name as number two in the rankings. Again, each committee member returns to the list to choose the weakest remaining candidate, then the strongest, and so on. This technique is frequently helpful in clearly distinguishing the strongest and weakest candidates. Even if it fails to bring consensus on the strongest candidate, perhaps agreement can be reached on identification of the weakest, reducing the group under consideration so that full attention can be focused on the stronger applicants. (pp. 27-28)

But however the job is done, the committee must ultimately settle on its number-one choice for the job. The committee chairman should then go to that individual and inform him that he is the committee's first choice and that the job is his when, after a final review of all considerations, a mutually satisfactory understanding on philosophy, objectives for the school, policy, and principles of operation has been reached. It is assumed at this point that the candidate has already avowed his sincere

interest in the position and will accept the appointment if such understanding is achieved.

When both parties have made a commitment, it is possible for them to talk freely and candidly with each other, and they should talk at length, for what is agreed upon in these conversations will surely be the foundation for the working relationship between the head of the school and the board of trustees.

In these conversations, all areas concerning the school should be explored with complete candor on both sides. The trustees should state their position without equivocation on all substantive matters, and the prospective head should reveal his own ideas and convictions. If there are important policy matters upon which the board does not have unanimous or widespread agreement, these should be honestly revealed to the candidate. The effective working relationship between the head and the board can only be truly successful if it is based on complete honesty and understanding on both sides. And this honesty and understanding cannot be achieved unless the candidate, prior to accepting the appointment as head, knows as fully as possible the personal and policy situation into which he will be coming.

For example, if the board wants a restrictive enrollment policy, that should be made clear to the candidate, who, in turn, must decide whether he can accept such a policy, live with it, and implement it. When a board does not reveal its position on such matters, it is deluding the person who must carry out its policies. If the board has reached a decision to change some of the existing policies in the school and is expecting the candidate to carry out these changes, it is important that they decide from the outset to back the candidate fully in his attempts to

effect these changes. Similarly, a candidate who takes a headship and does not disclose that his or her personal convictions are contrary to the stated policies of the board does so under false pretenses.

Admittedly, it is difficult to cover every item of policy (and, indeed, many policies are not always perfectly clear), but unless most basic policy has been established, understood, and agreed on, trustees are in no position to engage a head. Complete and precise understandings on as many basic questions as possible must be established at this stage, before the headship is formally offered and accepted. One might think of the interviews and initial exchanges of information as the preliminary phase, and the conversations in which policy understandings and agreements are worked out as the critical phase. It is in this critical phase that all possible issues should be resolved so that any area in which future conflicts might develop can be minimized. If understandings are reached on basic questions, then and only then should an agreement for the employment of the head be drawn up.

A sound and effective working relationship between a head and a board of trustees will develop successfully if, and only if, these elements exist at the time the head is appointed: (1) Both the prospective head and the search committee are adequately informed of the scope of the headship and the work and responsibilities it entails. (2) There has been frank and open exchange of information on all pertinent matters between the parties. (3) A mutually satisfactory understanding has been achieved between the parties on all basic issues of policy and arrived at <u>after</u> both parties have made a definite commitment to each other about the position. (4) An agreement setting out the conditions of employment for the head has been established. These conditions should include not

only the conditions of employment but the conditions for a peaceful and equitable ending of that employment, should this become necessary. These latter conditions should cover such matters as terminal leave, the possibility of sabbatical leave, and separation pay.

Epilogue: After the Selection

Once the trustees have voted and the new head has been offered and accepted the position, the last formality is to write and send a letter about the new head to all the school's constituency, and, by courtesy, to his or hers. Do not forget to send the letter to those with whom the search committee has had any previous correspondence (in fact, these people should be notified before the public announcement). This kind of communication is the best sort of public relations for the school and helps the new head to begin his or her administration with a knowledgeable and sympathetic audience.

II

TO THE CANDIDATE

While this section is designed primarily for the first-time candidate, there may be portions of it that will be helpful to experienced candidates as well.

Think before You Act

Probably every teacher in an independent school has given at least passing thought to the possibility of becoming a school head one day. He (or she) is most likely to have done so when frustrated by the apparent insensitivity, indifference, or lack of understanding on the part of his own head, muttering to himself, "If I ever get to be a head, I'll handle this kind of thing correctly!" But even in calmer, more sober moments, this vision of someday becoming a head may persist, to the point of wondering, "What kind of a head would I make?"

Obviously, the position of head of a school provides the power to put some of your educational ideas into effect, the income to put your children through college, and the probability of greater recognition in the independent school world. But here you may well pause, for the head of any school is in the limelight for most of the hours of the day. The position itself will change your life and that of your spouse and family. Thus, all of them had better be in on the discussion and decision before you take the plunge. Never was a head's job more challenging and demanding than it is today. Yet, despite the difficulties and demands of the job, few people who have once become heads turn back from that position with ease and grace; once you have been a head, it is hard to "go back."

How Do You Make Your Candidacy Known?

First of all, it is not only courteous but sensible to discuss your ambitions with the head of your school. Your head's recommendation is possibly the most important factor in advancing your candidacy. Getting your name on the lists of the NAIS School Head Clearinghouse Service, for instance, can be done only through your head. Also, your head can advance your candidacy in a wide variety of informal ways. You should use your college placement office, if it has one, making sure that your resume and recommendations are up to date. You can also register with commercial agencies, but most of these charge a fee to the candidate. In any event, you should spread your net as widely as possible. Another beneficial step would be for you to meet and talk with consultants who advise boards of trustees on searching for and selecting heads of schools. These wise and experienced people are constantly on the lookout for able candidates with personal and professional qualities that may fit a particular school with whose search they are helping.

While candidates occasionally become heads only a few months after making their decision, it normally takes quite a while--even several years. So the quest to become a head requires patience and wisdom, and meanwhile the would-be head must labor away conscientiously at his or her daily job. In fact, for many candidates, it is the very process of growth, maturing, and self-preparation involved in seeking a headship that finally brings them the prize.

The Formal Interview

The formal interview is obviously the key time for the candidate, since trustees invite the candidate to an interview at their school only

when they are seriously considering him or her for the head's job. As one experienced candidate has noted, it is vitally important for you to "be yourself, and don't try to be or say what you think trustees may want to hear." Also, it is important for you to do your homework thoroughly before any interview. You should have thought through your own educational philosophy clearly and cogently. You need not formalize it in writing; in fact, it would probably come more naturally from you if you did not. But some boards may ask you for a written statement. Either way, you should be prepared to explain your philosophy and to do so coherently and succinctly. You should learn all you can about the school you are visiting before you go there and know what questions you want to ask about it. Don't be afraid to ask searching questions--courteously and gently phrased, of course. If you are to commit your life (and that of your family) to a school, you are entitled to find out all you can about it, good and bad. You should discuss the whole idea of the interview with your spouse in considerable detail, since he or she will be interviewed, too, and his or her judgment will certainly figure in your final decision.

As we have said, the average candidate seldom "wins" on his first try for a school. But there has to be a first try, and the experience can be invaluable in preparing you to do better on the next one. The second time around, you will be better able to "keep your cool," think clearly, phrase your thoughts and questions effectively, and generally make a stronger impression.

During the interview, the trustees' questions may be searching and demanding, or may seem obvious and inane, but they are all designed for one purpose--to find out about you, both in terms of the substance of your

answers and the way you go about answering their questions. It is well to remember that "the board" is not one homogeneous body; it is a collection of individuals of varying backgrounds and wisdom. You may encounter one or more stupid, insensitive, garrulous trustees, by whom it would obviously be wrong and foolish to judge the entire board. You can doubtless anticipate many of the trustees' questions and at least think about your responses. Be prepared to live with all of your answers, and don't be afraid to say "I don't know."

Your own questions, while diplomatically phrased, should be as searching and complete as you feel necessary to enable you to find out what you should know about the school and its students. As independent schools have become less autocratic and hierarchical, the attitudes and opinions of the various members of the school "family" have become increasingly important. As a result, part of most interviews today is a session (or sessions) with students, teachers, parents, alumni. The trustees should have prepared the way for you in interviews with these elements of the school family, laying down certain ground rules for these sessions, but they may not have. Thus, it is well for you to ask about the nature and number of meetings you will have when you visit the school. If the trustees have not arranged for you to meet other groups in the school, it is perfectly proper for you to ask them to do so.

In any event, you should realize that meetings with students, teachers, parents, or alumni may very well be quite different and less well structured than those with the trustees. If this happens, you are on your own. A light touch and a sense of humor are valuable at such times. Also, you are certainly entitled to ask questions of these groups as well as answer theirs--and you should do so.

Final Bargaining

If you are offered a headship, don't make a decision before every one of your questions has been answered to your satisfaction. Often a young candidate is so eager to show a board what he can do that he accepts the head's job with some major areas of policy left vague and undiscussed, only to find out that one or more of these areas are vital to the functioning of the school. For example, if the board favors a restrictive admissions policy, whether it has been explicitly stated or not, a newly appointed head may find himself in real trouble if he changes this policy. A clash between board and head on such a policy matter may lead to great unhappiness and tension, and even to the head's early separation from the school.

Even after such an understanding has been reached, you are bound to be in for surprises. No board, however well informed or candid, can possibly tell you about the enormous variety of problems and challenges you will come up against. The outgoing head can often be helpful, but try to talk with others in positions of responsibility at the school as well. The more you can learn about the school between the time your appointment is announced and the day you take office, the better off you will be.

Before you agree to take the job, be sure that all of the mechanical details of your employment are fully discussed and clearly understood. Your best bargaining time is before you are hired. Check out your salary, your vacation(s), your retirement provisions, arrangements for your children's education, and the board's thinking on your salary increases and perquisites. To illustrate this last point, suppose the school provides the head with a school-owned house. If it needs refurbishing, the time to agree on this is before you become head, for if you wait until after

you become the head, when you have to find the money in the school budget to do it, you may feel the school can't afford it, despite your family's pleas.

It would be well for you to discuss with the president of the board how best you can cooperate and work smoothly together. A useful arrangement is an annual scheduled talk between the two of you about your working conditions, a possible raise in salary, and your good and bad performances during the past year--the same sort of yearly sessions you will have with your teachers.

Increasingly, boards and heads favor the development of some sort of evaluation form that both the head and the president of the board fill out, in which both sides evaluate the head's performance during the past year, stressing strong points and points that need improvement. This type of understanding and "clearing the air" enable the board and the head to avoid a build-up of relatively petty misunderstandings and dissatisfactions that might otherwise grow to serious proportions.

The Decision

Finally, if the board offers you the position and you know you want it, run over a short checklist to make sure that you and the board have discussed and agreed on the key issues. Points the list might include are:

1. Exactly what does the board expect of the head? If changes are in store, are you satisfied that the board will back you as its instrument in these changes of policy?

2. What is the school's philosophy--now and in the future, say, the next ten years?

3. What is the faculty hiring policy? Salary scale? Perquisites?

4. What is the school's admissions policy? Enrollment prospects?

5. What are the school's present financial situation and its future prospects?

6. How do the trustees see their role, responsibilities, and areas of authority? Does this coincide generally with your own point of view?

7. Are all the mechanical details of your employment clearly spelled out and agreed upon?

8. Are there other important or distinctive school policies that should be discussed?

9. Have you agreed on a clear, equitable procedure for ending your employment, should this become necessary?

Then, when all questions on both sides that can be answered have been answered (or explored fully), and all decisions that can be made have been made, sign on the dotted line and enter into the joys and griefs of being a head.

Appendix A

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHANGE OF SCHOOL HEAD

DIGBY ACADEMY

Susquehanna, Pennsylvania 18847
Telephone: (717) 649-3502

October 7, 1974

Dear Students, Faculty, Parents, Alumni, and Friends:

Our distinguished and able Headmaster, Ralph O. North, has tendered his resignation effective June 30, 1975, and the Board of Trustees has reluctantly acted upon his request. The enclosed copies of the exchange of correspondence between Mr. North and myself speak for themselves in this regard.

At our meeting on October 5, the Board of Trustees authorized the appointment of a search committee whose charter will be both to define the needs of the school and the desirable profile of a new head of the school, and to search out and secure a worthy successor to Mr. North. We assure you that this task will be carried out diligently and thoroughly, and we invite your comments and recommendations, addressed to the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. John C. Trotter, in care of the school.

In addition to Mr. Trotter, other Trustees serving on the Committee will include several Alumni, and former faculty and parents. Representatives of the present students, faculty, and parents will be invited to consult with the Committee.

We are indebted to Ralph and Helen North for the twelve years of outstanding and devoted leadership which they have given to Digby, and we are confident that in the next few months the committee for selection of a new Head will nominate a strong and worthy successor to lead Digby in the years ahead.

In this undertaking, we urge your active interest and support.

Sincerely yours,

S/ Bayard Witherspoon, III

Bayard Witherspoon, III, M.D.
President, Board of Trustees

DIGBY ACADEMY

Susquehanna, Pennsylvania 18847
Telephone: (717) 649-3502

October 1, 1974

Bayard Witherspoon, III, M.D.
Mount Mercy Hospital
642 Center Street
Binghamton, New York 13903

Dear Bayard:

As you know, I have given considerable thought during the past year or so to the question of how long I should continue as headmaster of Digby. You and all of the Trustees have been more than generous in the ways you have supported me and urged me to carry on in the position. Now, however, as I suggested to you in May, I am convinced that the time has come for Digby to have new leadership in the headmaster's post, and I therefore request that you accept my resignation, to be effective June 30, 1975. Since it is important that the Board of Trustees have ample time to determine the right person to lead the school in the future, I think it essential that I let you know now of my firm decision.

My reasons for this decision are, ultimately, quite simple. I will have worked with you, faculty and students, parents and alumni, for twelve years, during times of great stress, far-reaching developments, changes, setbacks and successes. I feel that Digby should now have someone as headmaster with a freshness of outlook and with a buoyancy and energy greater than I now have, to lead creatively in the continuing development of a distinctive and dynamic school here. Also, I am confident that Digby has at this time the kind of commitment from the present faculty and student body, past and present parents, and alumni, to guarantee a healthy vitality and renewed strength of purpose in support of whomever the Trustees choose as my successor.

Helen and I will always cherish the years of our life here, as will our children, for Digby has been a happy home as well as a fulfilling work for us, and we want to thank you and the Trustees for your devotion and support.

Sincerely,

S/ Ralph

Ralph O. North

MOUNT MERCY HOSPITAL

642 Center Street
Binghamton, New York 13903

October 5, 1974

Ralph O. North
Headmaster, Digby Academy
Susquehanna, Pa. 18847

Dear Ralph:

It is with a great deal of regret that the Board of Trustees of Digby Academy accepts your resignation as Headmaster, effective June 30, 1975.

It would be impossible for me to put into words the sincere appreciation of the whole Digby community for your twelve years of devoted service. We will miss you and Helen, your diligence, your vision, your grace under pressure, your enthusiasm, your steadfastness, your resilience, which have all contributed to your outstanding leadership ever since you came to Digby in 1963.

We extend to you and your family our heartfelt wishes for equal success in your future endeavors.

With kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

S/ Bayard

Bayard Witherspoon, III, M.D.
President, Board of Trustees
Digby Academy

The Search Committee

John C. Trotter, Chairman
13 East 59th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

James R. Dancer, '41
Penn Mutual Life Ins. Co.
672 State Fair Blvd.
Syracuse, N.Y. 13219

Reeves Goodhue
NASSP
1904 Association Drive
Reston, Va. 22091

Thomas C. Hartford, Jr.
Nettles, Hartford & Snite
462 Burns Avenue
Harrisburg, Pa. 16504

Harriet Hatch
R.F.D. 3
Dorset, Vt. 05251

Russell C. Mears, '72
P.O. Box 1332
Cornell University
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

Nathaniel J. Potter, '46
Johnson Industries
1411 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

Pierson S. Thatcher, '37
Digby Academy
Susquehanna, Pa. 18847

The Search Committee is charged with finding the best candidate to lead the school, keeping in mind the objectives of the school as outlined by the Board of Trustees. Students, faculty, parents, alumni, and friends are invited to communicate their thoughts promptly to Mr. Trotter or to any other member of the Search Committee or the Board.

Other Members of the Board of Trustees

Col. N. T. Bangs, '48
West Point, N.Y.

Rev. William Barss, '53
Seattle, Wash.

Wells Brown
Philadelphia, Pa.

Newton S. Butcher '51
Olean, N.Y.

S. David Jones
Ardsley, N.Y.

Harold A. Miller
Wayne, Pa.

Briggs R. Morton, '62
New York, N.Y.

Appleton Mulroy, '51
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Nolan O'Brien, '68
Cambridge, Mass.

Peter P. Partridge, Jr., '44
Montrose, Pa.

Ward R. Stimson, '57
Youngstown, Ohio

Rosemary Tuttle
Upper Darby, Pa.

Helen Watson, '71
Princeton, N.J.

Bayard Witherspoon, III, M.D.
Binghamton, N.Y.

Andrew M. Wood
Scranton, Pa.

Robert J. Young, Jr., '61
Susquehanna, Pa.

Appendix B

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL AND HEAD'S POSITION

On Monday, December 3, 1973, David Rountree, headmaster of Hazen Country Day School since 1970, was appointed headmaster of Applegate School, Drewton, Maryland.

Accordingly, the Board of Trustees of Hazen Country Day has instituted procedures to secure the services of a new head of school to assume duties July 1, 1974.

THE SCHOOL

Hazen Country Day School is a coeducational college preparatory day school located in Hazen, Ohio, a residential community adjacent to the city of Cleveland. Serving the greater Cleveland area, the school enrolls 682 students from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade; the senior class consists of approximately sixty students, all of whom normally attend college.

Since its founding in 1929, Country Day has endeavored to provide an academic program of quality and substance which takes full cognizance of the individuality of each student and exists in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. The founding headmaster, Mr. James Truslow, was widely known and highly regarded in independent education in America as an innovative and humane leader. The values which underlie the present program have their origin in the early days of the school--the belief that one must be well prepared for life as well as for college, that the Fine Arts are an integral part of a humanistic education, that in every area of experience one learns by doing.

Country Day is an established and respected part of the greater Cleveland community. The school is situated on a campus of 14 acres. The fourteen school buildings are set among elm, maple, and oak trees, and surrounded by plantings of dogwood and rhododendron. Buildings include an administration building, containing offices, a library, and classrooms; an auditorium; two gymnasiums; a separate lower school building; an art room; and a dining room. Capital funds in excess of $800,000 have been raised for a library-learning resource center and a science complex which are now under construction. The physical plant is valued at $4,700,000.

The stocks and securities which constitute the school's endowment fund are valued at $1.1 million. The school prides itself in its sound financial management and has operated with a small surplus the past two years.

Applicants for admission are considered for every grade without regard to race or religion. For the coming year there are approximately 130 applicants for 40 places in the kindergarten, over forty applicants for the six places available in the eighth grade.

Believing that the strength of an academic program lies in the quality of the teaching and the diversity of the student body, the school is committed to attracting and maintaining the strongest faculty possible and has in recent years dedicated income from endowment for financial assistance to deserving students.

The school is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of Ohio, and operates as the Hazen Country Day School, Inc., an association of parents represented by the Board of Trustees.

THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The trimester curriculum, adopted in September 1971, provides a broad range and flexibility in the offerings of the several departments. In addition to its long tradition of involvement in art, music, dance, and woodworking, Country Day participates in the Advanced Placement program (in May 1973, 22 students took 30 exams) and offers computer programming. During the last two weeks of the year seniors engage in a variety of independent projects and community service activities.

Such innovative approaches as the open classroom and multi-age family groupings are an integral part of the lower school program, involving 30 teachers and 320 young students in the modern Boothby Building.

During the past year the school sponsored a six-week summer enrichment program, a two-week workshop on open classroom techniques for lower school teachers, evening courses for adults, a series of seminars on adolescent behavior for parents, a symposium on American culture, and a student festival of studio and performing arts.

The school is accredited by the North Central Association of College and Secondary Schools and by the Independent School Association of the Central States. The Hazen chapter of the Cum Laude Society was chartered in 1973.

THE HEAD

To lead and continuously build a great institution, the head of the school must have the following attributes:

-- Understanding and full support of the fundamental purposes and values of Hazen Country Day School.

-- Proven administrative ability--setting goals, delegating responsibility and coordinating the school's various internal and external activities. Of fundamental importance is the selection and leadership of talented individuals who together make a distinguished faculty and administration.

-- Sensitive understanding of the individual young person's processes of maturing in mind, body and spirit; and the capacity to stimulate young persons to perform to the best of their abilities.

-- Desire and ability to communicate effectively with parents, alumni and friends, as well as with students and faculty.

The head of the school will be provided a comfortable residence and usual vacation and fringe benefits. An equitable salary will be offered commensurate with responsibilities of the position and level of professional achievement.

Inquiries and nominations should be submitted to:

Mr. David C. Jasper
Jasper and Sons, Inc.
P.O. Box 477
Cleveland, Ohio 44122
(216) 434-0917

THE PURPOSE

The school has recently undertaken a project to define its purposes, goals and specific objectives. From these discussions a committee representing members of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, parents, and student body has drafted the following preliminary statement:

> Hazen Country Day School is a non-sectarian elementary and secondary school committed to providing the opportunity for individual development and a recognition of one's relationship and responsibility to his community. It is the intent of the school to create a dedication to excellence in an informal atmosphere conducive to the development of individual potential and mutual respect. Independent inquiry, responsible action, sustained scholarship and a concern for the problems about us, are fundamental to the educational goals of the school. The school recognizes that it shares with the family the responsibility of transmitting cultural and ethical values, fostering an appreciation of differences, as well as preparing for the changes of the future.

December 15, 1973

Appendix C

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY*

In order to satisfy legal requirements, recognize equal opportunity rights, and at the same time insure a search procedure that will develop the best candidates from a broadly drawn base, three important conditions must be met: the vacancy must be adequately posted; the screening procedures must be objective; and job offers must reflect equitable compensation considerations.

Affirmative action and equal opportunity provisions call for seeking the best possible person for a job, regardless of race, sex, age, or other extraneous factors. These laws do not require that less qualified candidates from underrepresented groups be hired in place of more qualified candidates. They do, however, require attention to insuring that the best qualified person is hired and that, if necessary, it can be demonstrated that the best qualified person was hired. The three conditions previously mentioned--adequate posting, objective screening, and equitable offers--must be met in order to provide such a demonstration.

Search committees need to be sensitive to the counterbalancing pressures of affirmative action, which seeks to work toward the inclusion in the work force of members of minority groups in proportion to their representation in the general population, and of legal and moral restrictions against quota systems. Additionally, committee members should know that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare found it necessary to add an investigatory member to its staff to deal with actions filed to protest personnel decisions reflecting reverse discrimination (against Caucasian males). It is important, then, to reaffirm the notion that the committee must seek the best qualified person for the position, without discrimination of any kind.

---

*Excerpted from Richard A. Kaplowitz, Selecting Academic Administrators: The Search Committee (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1973), pp. 7-9, with permission of the American Council on Education.

Appendix D

THE FUNCTION OF THE CONSULTANT

ASSOCIATED EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS CORPORATION

Belgrade, Maine 04917
August 21, 1974

Dear Frank:

After the appointment of a Selection Committee, or even before, the Board is faced with the reevaluation of the school; a statement of objectives and philosophy needs to be written with the help of a faculty committee. This will help to bring the faculty into the picture, though the Board does retain the power of choice.

Then comes the question of what kind of person the new head should be (usually eliciting qualifications that are impossible to fulfill), with some idea of the age limitations. There are times when a school needs an experienced older person--Bragner is the classic example. One might have said that about Deerfield, but Dave Pynchon meets the needs so well.

The Chairman and members of the Committee must be prepared to give TIME and thought to the search. A consultant can help short-cut the process by some weeding, but after all the choice must remain with the Committee. A consultant can also submit names, but all sources should be used--the NAIS office, college placement, etc., but remember that commercial sources will demand a percentage of the first year's salary. Our firm and a few others deal only directly with the schools.

Here are a few thoughts:

1. A final candidate is never a sure thing until everything is settled--living, salary, education of children, etc.

2. The wife is a very important part of a headmaster's success. She should be judged by other women as well as the men on the Committee.

3. A most thorough search should be developed for any finalists--in their present jobs and references sought <u>that are not the product of the candidate</u>--by people both in and out of education.

4. Even though there may be good reasons for a large selection committee, five seems to be a good number. Faculty representation may be advisable, or some kind of consultation with a faculty committee.

5. Be sure that the candidate has a good reception with plenty of time for discussion. It is a two-way street! You may want the candidate, but he or she too is making a choice.

6. Trustees must be prepared to answer detailed questions about the school and community.

7. Because a consultant has had the experience of living through a series of searches, he can help with procedural questions which arise; though every school is different and therefore it is important that the consultant be well acquainted with the school which he has for a client.

8. Use the lists that other schools have developed. Do not think they are a list of "cast-offs," because many either withdrew because of timing or wished to remain in their present job, often a promotion.

9. A consultant can help with a comparison of salaries and fringe benefits.

One can go on, Frank, but these are some thoughts for what they are worth.

Yours sincerely,

S/ Wils

Wilson Parkhill

Mr. Frank R. Miller
Nat'l. Ass'n. of Independent Schools
4 Liberty Square
Boston, Mass. 02109

CARL W. ANDREWS, JR.
Educational Consultant

Orleans, Mass. 02653
August 14, 1974

Dear Frank:

Perhaps the best way to respond to your request is simply to try and put down some random thoughts about the consultant and his role in the search for a new head for a school. Since I have no pride of authorship, use any or none of what I say, as it fits your purposes.

Some of my comments will be from personal experience, for I began to work in this area just three years ago next month. The fact that my first job was Hinchcliff School, and somehow the fact that I convinced Henry Winch to take on the challenge of a new school, made it seem to me to be an easy sort of thing to do. It has become less so as time has gone on, and I have learned a good bit more about the ways to approach a search than I thought possible.

In my first few assignments I thought my task was to supply the names of bright young men and women to the selection committee of a school, and then sit back and let them pick and choose. That was obviously rather simplistic. It soon became evident that perhaps my greatest service was working with a board or committee on getting them to understand, or be forced to identify, what sort of school they really wanted, and, secondly, to help them in "structuring" their search, visits by the candidates, interviews, etc., so that it would be most efficient and beneficial to both parties. Merely finding candidates is perhaps the least difficult part of the job, but finding candidates who are not just shopping or interested only in the experience of the interview process is a bit more difficult. I find that I am usually answering a variety of questions from "What is reasonable compensation?" to "Who should see the candidate and his wife when they come for a visit?" I find most committees have never really thought about such little suggestions as housing a husband and wife in a hotel, rather than with a board member. This is a courtesy--at very little extra cost--which can reduce the tension of the visit to a considerable degree. I find that I am suggesting often that when a schedule is made up, there be some free time, so that husband and wife are not constantly on the go and can have some time to put their feet up and compare notes. (A lot of these ideas came from personal experience, of course. On my first visit to my old school, I saw 12 trustees, individually, a half-hour appointment each, beginning at 1 Wall Street, with a half hour in between and ending in Helen McFee's office at 5:30. By that time, I did not care whether I got the job or not!)

It was Wilson Parkhill, certainly, who established many of the ground rules for this profession within a profession. Although I am not sure, I suspect that the others whom we both know do not really operate very differently. Our fees are about the same, I think. My fee is all-inclusive

(telephone, secretarial, mailing, reproduction, etc.), excepting for out-of-pocket expenses involved in a trip to the school. I think this visit is essential, but in the 22 or 23 searches I have done, I have not found it necessary to go back more than once. Actually, I suspect that we end up costing the school very little, for I think by our pre-screening we save them considerable monies in inviting candidates who really should not have been asked in the first place.

There really is no magic to the service that a "search" consultant can provide. I suspect that were it not for the increasingly high rate of turn-over, there would be no one doing this sort of thing. Schools can, and do, manage the search successfully on their own. It is my feeling, however, that our service could become proportionally more valuable as the turn-over rate escalates. Certainly the NAIS lists are helpful to a school, and everyone knows a dean somewhere. There are, however, some sources which we have that the ordinary committee might never know about. For example, the established head, whose name, understandably, would not be on a list, but who has told me, "If the right place comes along, let me know. I'm very happy where I am (they always say that), but I might consider a change--or a new challenge (sic)." What the consultant can do, in addition to providing perhaps a more reasonable, workable and meaningful list of candidates than would generally be available, is to save hours of time for a committee. Few members of search committees have the time--or the know-how--to devote to the process. That is one of the things we are being paid for. In addition, since my experience indicates that few members of the committee have the slightest idea as to the duties of a school head, they begin groping madly for the renaissance man who hasn't been born yet.

I suppose you could say that if you had the time, you could buy a a manual and learn to adjust your automobile engine yourself. It really isn't difficult. But you end up going to a mechanic, who, through his own experience or knowledge, can probably save you time--and, hopefully, prevent a serious mistake.

Two final thoughts: (1) Many schools feel, if they haven't seen 50-100 candidates, they haven't done the job. This doesn't have to be the case, if you've done the pre-screening process well. And (2) Consultants don't accept the responsibility of "picking the head"--they're not in on the final selection process.

Cordially,

S/ Carl

Mr. Frank R. Miller
NAIS
4 Liberty Square
Boston, MA 02109

Appendix E

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING CANDIDATES' VISITS TO SCHOOLS

A key item for both the candidate and the school constituency is the school visit. Too often this visit is poorly organized and wastes time for all concerned. Inefficiency is not the result of ineptitude but simply lack of practice; and happily, most schools will not be faced with the prospect of replacing the head very often. It is our hope that we might offset this deficiency somewhat by making suggestions regarding good practices on candidate visitation. As each school obviously varies in its character and makeup, it will have to adapt these suggestions to its own peculiarities, but following the general idea contained herein should make for more efficient and helpful visits.

I. Organization

A. Search committee appoints one member to handle each day's activity and to introduce candidate to the school.

B. Search committee appoints an administrator or faculty member to act as host and schedule expeditor during the visit.

II. Brief faculty and students on the schedule for the visit and its purpose.

III. Schedule

A. Administration: Short visits--roughly half-hour visits with key faculty and administration. Include the outgoing head, key department heads, assistant head, business manager, and others, where appropriate.

B. Faculty: If there is a general faculty coffee hour in the morning when the candidate can have a general get-acquainted time, this serves as an excellent introduction. In addition to this, it also works well to meet groups of faculty representing different sections of the school. Also, a half hour or 45 minutes for an open-ended discussion with the candidate, by all the teachers, is important.

C. Students: Ideally, it seems wise to schedule two meetings, one with student leaders, and the second one with a random sample of students.

D. Brief class visit: Most candidates would like to see a few minutes of several classes. If some lag time is allowed in this obviously busy day, suggestions can be made as to where the candidate might profitably visit.

E. Campus tour: In the course of all these visits, the candidate has, in all probability, seen most of the plant, but if the plant is large, some time should be afforded to see other important facilities.

Appendix F

DESCRIPTION OF A CANDIDATE'S VISIT

HAZEN COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL
5432 Webster Drive
Hazen, Ohio 44135

Headmaster's Study October 21, 1974

Mr. Frank R. Miller
National Association of Independent Schools
4 Liberty Square
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

Dear Frank:

A comment or two about headmaster searches:

I was much impressed by a remark that last year's board president made about the search process at Country Day, which involved a heavy three-day schedule of meetings, beginning with breakfast and extending well into evenings. Dave Jasper said, "We are anxious to establish as broad a base of support as possible for our new head." I had the feeling after my three-day stint that all major constituencies in the school had had as good an opportunity to look me over as time allowed. I gather, while I can't be sure, that those with whom I met did in fact receive a thorough hearing from the selection committee. At the same time that I was being looked over, I had ample opportunity to ask my own questions and to observe much about the school, including some classes at my request and some athletic practices, lunch, and so on. What I say here may be merely an obvious outline of the way it ought to be.

I have heard that some felt that the immersion in Country Day was too intensive, that candidates had no time left to breathe. I can't agree. Jane and I left our three-day workout exhausted but also exhilarated. Furthermore, what happened during the school visit was not a bad reflection of what a head's days are like routinely. They involve meeting with many groups and persons, and they tend to be long, as you well know.

Another practice observed by the Country Day search committee was the visit to the candidate's own school. The president and vice-president of the board spent a day at my school, and I was able to arrange for them to meet with students, parents, and administrative assistants. I suppose that in some cases such a visit might present diplomatic problems, but surely a search committee can find helpful information about a candidate from those other than his board of trustees, if he happens already to be a head, or from a call to his head of school. If it can be arranged, such a visit should be.

Several years ago I was a candidate, one of the finalists, I believe, for a school whose trustees notified me that my candidacy was over by sending me a brief notice that another had been appointed. A note is clearly more appropriate. In their relief at finding the right man, selection committees should not neglect good manners.

I enclose a copy of the schedule for Jane's and my visit here. The names of persons will mean nothing to you, but I might merely comment that they are board members and a few parents who, as I see now, represent a variety of interests and emphases within the school community. The second full day of the visit was less structured than the first so that I could select groups and activities that I felt it appropriate to visit after my first day's experience.

If Country Day had found me wanting and had sought other candidates, I should have been disappointed, of course; but I would have felt very strongly that the selection process had been both thorough and gracious--that I had been privileged to see a very well-gathered operation.

I should not have carried on so long except that I feel sure that some schools still do a perfunctory job, comparatively, in the selection process. In a time when a head needs that broad base of support that Dave Jasper spoke of, only a thorough job will do. If candidates and schools themselves become a bit weary, better so than to feel later that the search was o'erhasty.

Sincerely,

S/ Dave

Davis Butterfield

DB/hpt
encl: 1

Davis Butterfield

Sunday, March 10

3:30 P.M.	Arrive Hazen - Met at airport by Dave Jasper and Tom Coyne
6:00 P.M.	Dinner at Hazen House Hotel with Jack and Virginia Rountree and Jim and Jody Chester
7:30 P.M.	Joint meeting of board and selection committee at home of Jim and Peggy Johnson
	Returned to hotel by Dick Webster

Monday, March 11

8:00 A.M.	Breakfast at Hazen House with Art Hungerford and John Mitchell. Driven by them to Country Day.
10:00 A.M.	Meeting with the Faculty Committee
11:20 A.M.	Lunch with Lower School
12:00 Noon	Meeting with the Student Committee
12:45 P.M.	Open meeting with students
3:30 P.M.	Open meeting with faculty and board
	Returned to hotel by John French
7:30 P.M.	Dinner with the Appletons, Densmores, and Livingstons

Tuesday, March 12

8:00 A.M.	Breakfast with David Hilliard and Don Garten. Driven by them to Country Day for morning of visiting at school.
12:20 P.M.	Lunch with Middle School
2:00 P.M.	Driven by Ginny Bailey to meeting with selection committee at Hazen Country Club
4:00 P.M.	To airport by Shaun O'Rourke for
5:00 P.M.	Flight

Mrs. Davis Butterfield (Jane)

Sunday, March 10

As per Mr. Butterfield's schedule

Monday, March 11

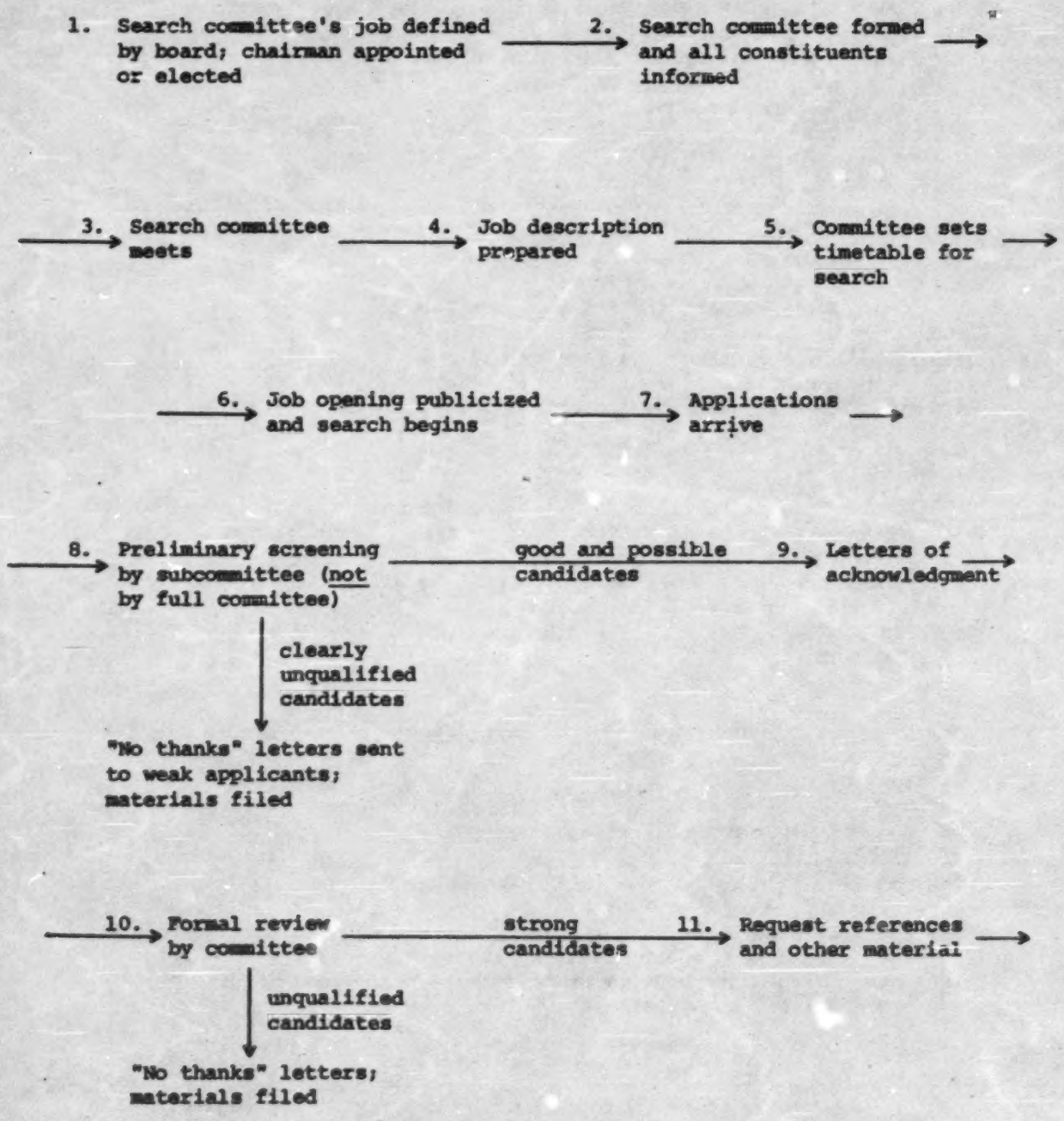
10:30 A.M.	Picked up at Hazen House by Adelaide Brooks for tour of school and to Betty Williams' house
12:00 Noon	Picked up by Betty Grant for lunch and tour of city
7:30 P.M.	Dinner at Appletons'

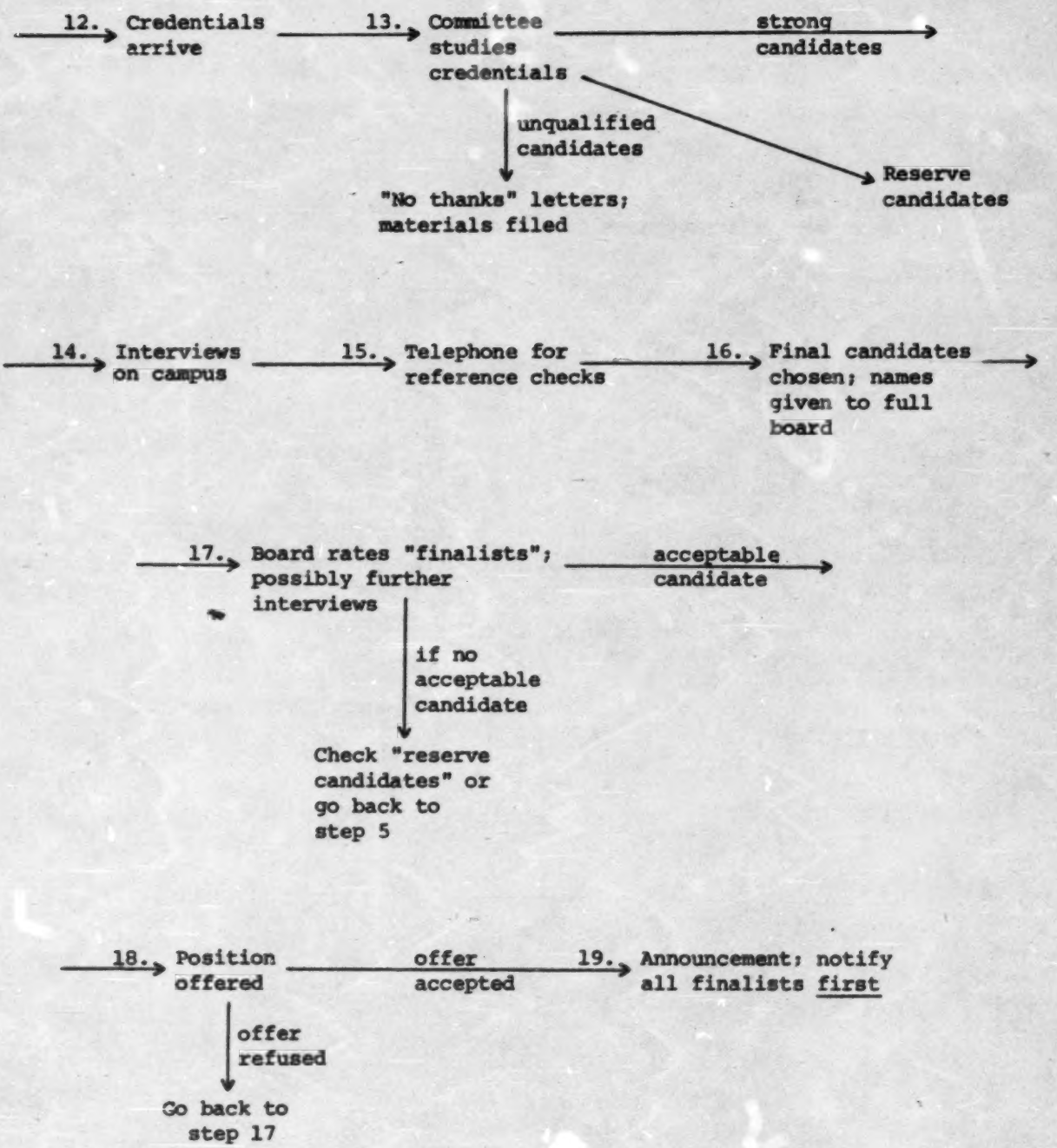
Tuesday, March 12

Open as to her wishes--touring city, visiting school, etc.; Anne Brown
To Country Club by 3:30 P.M.

Appendix G

THE SEARCH PROCESS*


1. Search committee's job defined by board; chairman appointed or elected
2. Search committee formed and all constituents informed
3. Search committee meets
4. Job description prepared
5. Committee sets timetable for search
6. Job opening publicized and search begins
7. Applications arrive
8. Preliminary screening by subcommittee (not by full committee)
good and possible candidates
9. Letters of acknowledgment
clearly unqualified candidates
"No thanks" letters sent to weak applicants; materials filed
10. Formal review by committee
strong candidates
11. Request references and other material
unqualified candidates
"No thanks" letters; materials filed


12. Credentials arrive
13. Committee studies credentials
strong candidates
unqualified candidates
"No thanks" letters; materials filed
Reserve candidates
14. Interviews on campus
15. Telephone for reference checks
16. Final candidates chosen; names given to full board
17. Board rates "finalists"; possibly further interviews
acceptable candidate
if no acceptable candidate
Check "reserve candidates" or go back to step 5
18. Position offered
offer accepted
19. Announcement; notify all finalists first
offer refused
Go back to step 17

*Adapted from Richard A. Kaplowitz, Selecting Academic Administrators: The Search Committee (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1973), pp. 14-15, with permission of the American Council on Education.

Appendix H

SUGGESTED READING

Books

Kaplowitz, Richard A. Selecting Academic Administrators: The Search Committee. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1973.

Kauffman, Joseph F. The Selection of College and University Presidents. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges, 1974.

Parkman, Francis, and E. Laurence Springer. The Independent School Trustee Handbook. 3d ed. Boston: National Association of Independent Schools, 1974.

Test, Daniel D. Guidelines, Questions and Observations for Headmasters and Boards of Trustees. Philadelphia: Friends Council on Education, 1974.

Articles

Bennis, Warren G. "Searching for the 'Perfect' College President." Atlantic, April 1971, pp. 39-53.

Reinert, Paul C., S.J. "The Problems with Search Committees." A.G.B. Reports, April 1974, pp. 10-14.